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## Foam Rubber For Your Home

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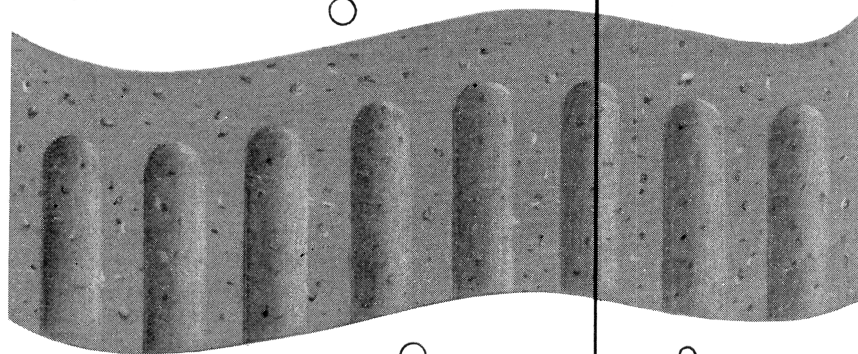
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# FOAM RUBBER

## *for your home*

by June Brown

**W**E'RE LOOKING to foam rubber these days for exceptional comfort in furnishings, for easier upkeep and greater durability.

Foam-filled furniture, rubber rug underpadding and latex mattresses are on the market in Iowa this season, waiting to prove their unusual advantages in day-to-day living.

Furnishings featuring foam rubber may seem a bit expensive right now. But when you're shopping for a new chair or sofa, rug padding or bedding, consider what foam rubber has to offer in return for the money you spend.

Probably first and foremost is its ability to last indefinitely. This long-lasting quality added to the comfort it gives may well make you decide foam rubber is worth the extra money. Other natural characteristics of foam rubber in any kind of furnishings are its light weight, its ease of cleaning and its resistance to moths and mildew.

What is foam rubber? It's made

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by whipping latex (the pure milk of the rubber tree) with chemicals to frothlike foam and then molding it into sheets or permanent form. Tiny air bubbles whipped into the latex are "baked in" and so, in the final product, are surrounded by thin elastic walls of latex.

Thus, foam rubber combines the natural elastic quality or "springiness" of latex and the buoyancy of air. By volume the material is about 85 percent air and 15 percent latex. It has much of the appearance and "feel" of angel food cake. The air cells provide self-ventilation, a comfort in hot weather.

With its unusual resilience, foam rubber compresses under the slightest pressure and expands automatically as soon as pressure is removed. Its ability to yield to pressure and then immediately bounce back to its original shape remains as long as the material itself lasts.

### In Furniture You Buy

Foam rubber cushions in furniture never pack down or mat, never need "plumping up." They

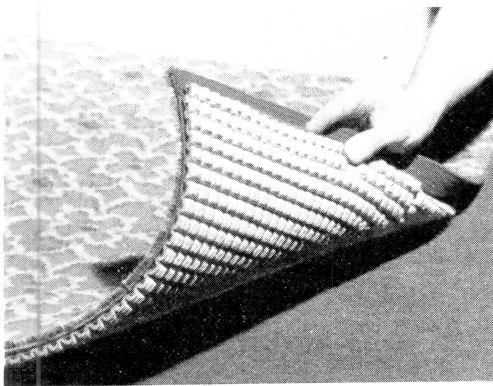
offer the comfort of plump, down cushions, but with less bulk and lighter weight.

Foam filling is affecting the design of furniture—giving it a trim and sleek look which fits well into modern-room settings. It's making possible smaller-scale upholstered furniture, and informal traditional furniture which is more appropriate for modern-day settings.

Foam filling lends itself to well-tailored upholstery and slip covers. There may be some wrinkling of the upholstery fabric covering a foam rubber cushion, but



Improved labeling can help you determine what you're getting.



Foam rubber underpadding is available in a variety of textures.

other types of upholstery filling are just as likely to cause wrinkling. The firmer the filling the less the wrinkling of the cover.

The difference in price between a foam-filled piece of upholstered furniture and one filled with feather and down or springs depends on the quality and amount of the foam rubber used.

The words "foam rubber" don't necessarily mean unusual comfort and durability. Just as there are various qualities of ordinary filler, there are different grades of foam rubber. Labels don't always tell what quality of rubber has been used, although labeling is rapidly improving. The best guide to good quality is to purchase from a reliable dealer, examine the furniture carefully and ask questions.

Pieces with foam rubber padding in the arms or back as well as rubber cushions will cost considerably more than a piece with only rubber cushions. The piece with only rubber cushions may cost very little more than a piece with the same quality feather and down fillings or springs. Some manufacturers are keeping costs of seating pieces down by using rubber filled cushions with some other type of filling in arms and backs.

The quality of foam cushioning in general has improved greatly since foam-filled furniture first appeared on the market. Best quality cushioning is of foam rubber all the way through, reversible, and shaped or molded through use of inner fillers and "crowns." Lower grades may consist of thin slabs of foam rubber padded with cotton which may

shift and cause uncomfortable seating. Less expensive foam filling is sometimes made of scrap rubber which tends to break easily.

Best quality foam filling is odorless. Check a foam-filled piece while you are in the store for a "rubberlike" odor. New odorants are now available to rubber-product manufacturers to completely eliminate any rubber odor.

## For Upholstering at Home

Revamping a favorite chair with foam rubber is much easier than re-tying the old springs in spring unit cushions. Rubber for home upholstering comes either in sheet form, in different thicknesses, or in ready-molded cushions.

The sheet rubber may be used over a solid seat surface, over caning or over springs. Upholstering may be just a matter of cutting the sheet rubber to proper shape and covering it with fabric. It may be sized and shaped, however, by building up piece on piece with linoleum cement as adhesive. It's easily pieced by laying adhesive tape lightly over the break and smoothing gently. Small pieces left over have many uses and needn't be wasted. Very thin sheeting ( $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch thick) is sometimes useful in padding such surfaces as headboards, gluing it in place with linoleum cement.

## "Springiness" for Rugs

Underpadding is always a good investment when you buy a rug. It lifts the rug from the hard floor, protecting it from grinding wear, and giving it longer life.

Foam rubber underpadding is available in a variety of textures from smooth sheeting to coarse waffle effects. It's ordinarily reinforced with fabric.

It may seem at first glance to be more expensive than ordinary cotton padding, but think of it as a lifetime investment. Remember that it can be put down in small pieces without tacking, can be easily moved and re-installed, and it will outlast the rug itself

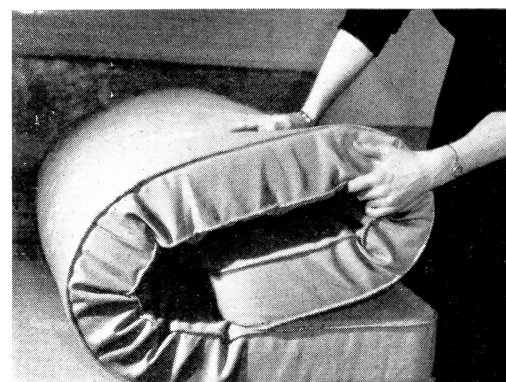
or any other type padding. Not only does it withstand matting over the years, but it's also insect-proof and easier to clean than other types. It can be shaken free of dust, cleaned with the vacuum or with a damp cloth. It will give small rugs as well as carpeting a long-lasting luxurious resiliency, and will help them to "stay put" without marring the floor surface.

It comes in different thicknesses, as well as different textures, cut to exact rug sizes. For wall-to-wall carpeting it comes in strips 36 to 53 inches wide. Strips can be easily joined together with pieces of adhesive tape.

## Mattresses

Rubber mattresses are still somewhat expensive, ranging between \$60 and \$80. But they promise lifetime service, while innerspring and other type mattresses must usually be replaced after about 10 years.

Rubber mattresses mold to the weight and shape of the sleeper, and as yet they all offer about the same degree of softness. They won't sag or get out of shape over a period of time, even without the



Rubber mattresses are more expensive but promise lifetime service.

usual turning and with "edge sitting."

Much lighter than the ordinary mattresses, a rubber one may be easily rolled for moving from place to place. The latex mattresses are about 4 inches thick, not so deep as the innerspring mattress. They're especially easy to clean.